

incision. The back cup prevents loss of pneumoperitoneum. The manipulator tube conforms to the angle of the sacral curve and allows for easy manipulation of the uterus. A 10-cc inflatable balloon at the distal end is used to stabilize the manipulator tube within the uterine cavity.<sup>1</sup> In addition, changes to the forward cup polymers allow the VCare to be used with both electrosurgical and harmonic energy sources, and holes in the cup have been placed so the cup can be sutured to the cervix for enhanced stability if desired.

ConMed claims the VCare saves operating room (OR) time, displaces the cervix away from ureters, displaces the bladder anteriorly, reduces blood loss, defines the dissecting plane of colpotomy, and prevents loss of pneumoperitoneum. Although these claims are not referenced on the Web site, they presumably stem from Dr. Ahluwalia's published work on total laparoscopic hysterectomy from 1996 (Dr. Ahluwalia developed and patented the device).<sup>2</sup> In this article, although reduced OR time and blood loss were realized, the reason was almost certainly attributable to increased surgeon experience because the VCare device was used in all the cases from the start.

Marketing statements aside, the VCare is pretty good. In numerous trials by the reviewer, it consistently provided superb uterine manipulation and elevation and very nicely delineated the vaginal cuff. Moreover, it is a lot easier to introduce than a RUMI™ System uterine manipulator (CooperSurgical, Trumbull, CT). On the downside, the forward cup still melts with prolonged exposure to a harmonic scalpel and, most annoyingly, the device rotates relative to the plane of the uterus with bigger specimens; suturing the cup to the cervix, which is cumbersome, does completely resolve the problem.

Design/Functionality Score: 3.5

### Innovation

The VCare is a clever device. Although its advances may not jump out as tremendous engineering feats, it does address many of the key issues lacking in other instruments. Specifically, the lockable sliding sleeve that adjusts the forward and distal cups is slick and effective, secures the device, and maintains pneumoperitoneum in most cases.

Innovation Score: 3

### Value

Priced at \$88, the VCare is a bit costly to use for every case as a uterine manipulator. But, for total or supracervical laparoscopic hysterectomies, the value is in the ease it adds to the procedure, especially when juxtaposed with costs of other disposables one might use for such a procedure.

Value Score: 4



VCare® Uterine Manipulator/Elevator (ConMed Endosurgery, Utica, NY). Photo courtesy of ConMed Endosurgery.

### Summary

Overall, the VCare Uterine Manipulator/Elevator is a very solid, well-designed instrument. For those looking to perform laparoscopic hysterectomies without a predetermined uterine manipulator preference, this device is an excellent first choice. Over time, different surgeons may find more cost-effective or preferred options, but this is as good a place to start as any.

Overall Score: 4

### References

1. VCare®. ConMed Endosurgery Web site. [http://www.conmed.com/endosurgery\\_vcure.php](http://www.conmed.com/endosurgery_vcure.php). Accessed February 1, 2009.
2. Ahluwalia PK. Total laparoscopic hysterectomy. *J Am Assoc Gynecol Laparosc.* 1996;3(4 suppl):S1-S2.

---

**Product:** Harvey Stirrups™  
**Company:** William Harvey Medical Equipment  
**Retail Price:** \$1595

---

James A. Greenberg, MD

Brigham and Women's Hospital, Faulkner Hospital, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA

[*Rev Obstet Gynecol.* 2009;2(1):70-71]

© 2009 MedReviews®, LLC

Design/Functionality: 3

Innovation: 1.5

Value: 2

Overall Score: 2.5

### Background

Medical stirrups are not cool. They do not catch our attention like a robot, a four-dimensional ultrasound machine, or some new fancy coagulation/cutting device. No, stirrups are not glamorous. We rarely think about them or study them and we certainly do not want to be in them. That

said, for those of us in the business, we are just another office with old magazines without stirrups.

In the office setting, by far the most common are heel-style stirrups. Conversely, in the OR, these are probably the least common, with boot-style and candy cane stirrups overwhelmingly dominating the leg support choices. Although obvious practical differences between an office examination table and an OR table most likely account for the location-related device differences, theoretically at least, one style of stirrup is likely better suited for a given procedure than another. And, as more and more OR procedures are moved to the office setting, perhaps the stirrups should move as well. Dr. William Harvey thinks so and has designed the stirrups to that end.

### Design/Functionality

Harvey Stirrups™ (William Harvey Medical Equipment, Honeoye Falls, NY) are essentially Allen boot-style stirrups that have been modified to fit into standard office examination tables and replace the factory-installed heel-style stirrups. There is a support rod for the stirrup that replaces the rod on the table stirrup and then a padded boot-style stirrup with hook-and-loop straps that slide easily onto the support rod. The company claims installation is simple and, in testing, it was very easy to make the switch on a Midmark 405 examination table. The stirrups are adjustable along the length of the support rod and retain the table's built-in abduction/adduction range of adjustability. Also, the boot-style stirrups are generally more comfortable than heel stirrups if they are adjusted properly.

On the downside, the boot is welded to the attachment clamp and cannot be adjusted at the ankle. This reduces its use across different patients with limited ranges of motion. Also, because the support rod needs to be changed to accommodate the Harvey Stirrups, it is impractical to switch back and forth between stirrup styles. Thus, an office needs to commit an examination table to this stirrup only.

Design/Functionality Score: 3

### Innovation

There really is nothing too innovative about the Harvey Stirrups other than nobody seems to have thought of this



*Harvey Stirrups™ (William Harvey Medical Equipment, Honeoye Falls, NY). Photo courtesy of William Harvey Medical Equipment.*

before. In that sense, it is a good idea but the technology is pretty standard.

Innovation Scale: 1.5

### Value

\$1595 is a lot to pay for stirrups. Because this is more expensive than most brand-new examination tables with heel stirrups, shelling out those kinds of dollars for an add-on seems a little excessive. However, if a given practice has an examination table that it commits to procedures only, the Harvey Stirrups would seem to be a reasonable investment.

Value Score: 2

### Summary

Overall, the Harvey Stirrups is a very solid product for a niche market. At \$1595 it seems impractical for the average gynecology practice, but would probably be a good investment for practices with a committed procedure room especially if intravenous conscious sedation is being used.

Overall Score: 2.5

*Dr. Greenberg reports no personal financial relationships with any of the companies whose products he reviews in this column.*